

ticles of plastic exudate is a factor to be seriously considered in the post-operative treatment.

3. That the character of catgut used in the peritoneum for any purpose should be of the best quality to insure complete absorption and it should be of the lightest weight possible that is consistent with the purpose it is intended to serve.

4. That the intestinal paresis that results from manipulation especially in the presence of infection is a factor of such gravity that every measure should be instituted to prevent its occurrence.

5. That when obstipation exists as a result of such paresis and is aggravated by partial constriction from adhesions, a stretching of the intestinal musculature takes place from the accumulation of gases, and that this overstretching may be to such a degree and so prolonged that it is impossible for the musculature to regain its tone.

6. That the absorption of toxins from the intestines under such conditions is the most potent factor in causing the death of the patient.

7. That for the purposes of relieving pressure within the intestines and so permitting the musculature to regain its tone, and for the purpose of preventing absorption of toxins from the bowels intestinal drainage through an artificial fistula is most efficient.

### CHINESE MEDICINE IN AMERICA.

By CHARLES KIRKLAND ROYS, M. D., Wei-hsien, China.

Conditions in China as a result of, or in spite of, the native practice of medicine, are bad enough; but it appears that certain wily Celestials are actually trying to introduce their system of medicine into America. It is hard for one not on the ground to tell just how far this propaganda has advanced, but to judge by pamphlets and newspaper articles, it has gained quite a foothold, at least on the Pacific Coast. At any rate, it seems time that the public should know something of the truth about the native pharmacopeia and practice of medicine in China. The writer has no intention of being drawn into a controversy on this subject. A certain wise old medical man (named Oliver Wendell Holmes) once said: "Controversy equalizes fools and wise men, and the fools know it." This adage largely explains why medical men as a class are so slow to enter the lists and appeal to the public prints in defense of what they know to be the truth. It is only in cases of glaring misstatement, with plausible promises incapable of fulfillment, that the temptation to tell a little truth, if only to relieve the monotony of lies on the subject, becomes irresistible.

The ethical principles involved in quackery and the vending of nostrums are not at once evident to all minds. Indeed, to some, the practice seems to have no ethical bearing at all; while some of the vendors even pose as "friends of the human race." Why should a simple combination of harmless drugs, which passes the tests of the Pure Food and Drug laws (and advertises the fact), be frowned upon by bearded medicos? Is there any reason, outside the danger to their business, which actuates these men? They are not infallible, they often do not agree over a case or a treatment; why should they unite to cry anathema when the subject of patent medicines is mentioned?

In the last analysis, it is because the actual effects, the end-results, of this particular form of

confidence-game are apparent and familiar to this small proportion of the community only, whose position as practitioners of medicine lays them open to the charge of prejudice in their testimony.

Ethical ideas are best conveyed by parables. Consider then the parable of the excursion steamer "General Slocum," conveying a thousand women and children up the East River one pleasant June day six or eight years ago. Fire breaks out in the bow, and, fanned by the wind of her forward rush, sweeps the old tinder-box from stem to stern. The helpless passengers, driven to the stern decks by the blast of oncoming flame, grasp what life-preservers are available, and leap overboard, most of them never to rise again.

Why? In the inquiry of our government, vigorously paternal after the fact, the reason came out. The life-preservers were of refuse cork, held together by iron rods. They were life-preservers which could not preserve life. To trust them in emergency was death. Piled under the seats (or on the shelves of the druggist), such life-preservers are harmless enough; but both are utterly unreliable in time of direst need. And the day will come when the men who advertise the cure of consumption by this or that "balm" or "syrup" or of cancer without the knife, and so delude thousands into delay that means death, will be considered on the same ethical level as those men who put the iron rods into the life-preservers, and will be treated accordingly. People are coming to realize the place of advertised medicines, and to understand that in sickness it does not matter so much *what* is given the patient, as it does *how* it is given him.

And it is frankly with the idea of helping on this campaign of education that the writer has attempted to set forth something of conditions in China, where is found a people, the oldest and greatest (at least numerically) in the world, still dependent on quacks and charlatans for the relief of physical ills. The Chinese probably have suffered as much "at the hands of many physicians" as any people in the world. Here is a vast and ignorant population which has cherished for ages the superstition that there are cure-alls, or at least specifics, for every ill to which flesh is heir. This superstition is the foundation on which the vast fortunes of patent-medicine men are reared.

A pamphlet has been circulated for some years on the Pacific Coast entitled "The Science of Oriental Medicine, Diet and Hygiene." It was issued by the "Foo and Wing" Herb Co., of Los Angeles, and may be taken as a fair sample of the claims of these genial Orientals, and a statement of the grounds on which they are based. Dr. Foo is said to be a "graduate" of the "Imperial Medical School" of China. He desires to found a school for the study of Oriental Medicine in America, on the ground that this system, having come down unchanged for four thousand years, must be better than western medical science, which is constantly changing, and is being added to from year to year.

Messrs. Foo and Wing seem to have been taken up by a typical patent-medicine promoter of unusual

ability, who realizes "that there are fortunes awaiting the people who are first to study into these matters, and adapt this system to the needs of our civilization" (p. 86 of pamphlet). Probably there are. The men who put the iron rods in the life-preservers probably made fortunes, too, yet they were not very popular about six years ago. And the men who delude credulous women with incipient cancer into dallying with "harmless herbal remedies," offering cures "without knife or plasters," in familiar charlatan's phraseology, should be put in the same category by all thinking people.

It does not seem likely, but there may be people in America who do not realize that the botany and materia medica of China have been investigated repeatedly by western scientists. Tatarinov, Williams, Hanbury, Porter Smith, and a host of other authorities might be cited, and only recently the writer had the privilege of meeting Mr. Frank Meyer, Botanical Explorer for the United States Government, on a trip which had covered some years of careful investigation in all parts of China. The "herbal remedies" are well-known to western physicians under their true botanical names, and with their actual, not legendary, properties tested in full by scientific methods. But, our promoter protests, foreigners have no knowledge of the ancient books from which Chinese medicine is taught. Evidently he is honestly ignorant of the number of times that the writings of the legendary "Shen Nung" (2700 B. C.) have been read and studied by sinologues like Dr. S. Wells Williams, and botanists like Dr. Ernst Faber, whose knowledge of the "Wen-li," or literary language of China, was certainly equal to that of Mr. Foo or Mr. Wing, and who were further possessed of scientific training and critical faculties which are entirely foreign to the parrot-knowledge of the Chinese scholar. There is no lack of knowledge of the foundations on which Chinese medicine rests, both in the writings ascribed to Shen Nung, and in the much more compendious work of Li Shi-chin, a little handbook in forty volumes; which is only some three hundred years old, and so not ranked as a first-rate authority by the physicians of the "old school," with whom Mr. Foo claims affiliation. The chapters in the pamphlet under consideration for which the learned Foo is evidently personally responsible, are a very fair presentation of the teaching of Chinese medical works. To avoid any possible charge of prejudice in translation, we will take his statements of Chinese ideas on human anatomy and physiology as they stand. If these statements are taken at their face value, then this production, appropriately bound in yellow, can have little peril to any one even dimly familiar with facts. It needs only a most cursory reading to show the absurdity of calling this medley of vague tradition, superficial observation, and illogical deduction a "Science" of Oriental Medicine.

We read that "The lungs belong to the mineral element. . . . They look like an umbrella. They have eight lobes." . . . "The Heart. When a man sleeps, the brain power returns to the heart." "The power of the Heart-case (pericardium?) goes through the natural heat between

the two kidneys, where is the seat of life. The heart and the brain and the kidneys are all connected by the current of air through the natural heat, and make up one family." This is proved to the entire satisfaction of the Celestial logician by the following facts: "The pulse follows the spine to the brain, and the kidneys furnish juices to the brain. This is shown because the natural juices of the kidneys are white, the marrow of the spine is white, and the natural juices of the brain are white." Later Mr. Foo gives a very good account of the Chinese cosmogony, which was also elucidated by the great and good Shen Nung, four thousand years ago, "Everything in the world is included in the five elements, namely, water, mineral, vegetation, fire and earth. In the vital organs there are also five kinds of elements, and everything in vegetation corresponds. . . . The color of things belonging to the fire element is red, the taste is bitter, and the power from these rushes through the system. These . . . influence the heart, the heart-case, and the small intestine, which belong to the fire element." "The natural color of the vegetation element is green. Now the gall is green, so you may know that the liver and the gall belong to the vegetation element." "Again, the natural color of the fire element is red. The blood is red. Therefore the heart and the heart-case belong to the fire element." Not to run through the entire classification, arranged on this most simple and convenient basis, we will choose one more gem. "The natural color of the earth element is yellow. The stomach gets power from the spleen, which produces the gastric juice. The color in this case is yellow—so you can know that the spleen and the stomach belong to the earth element."

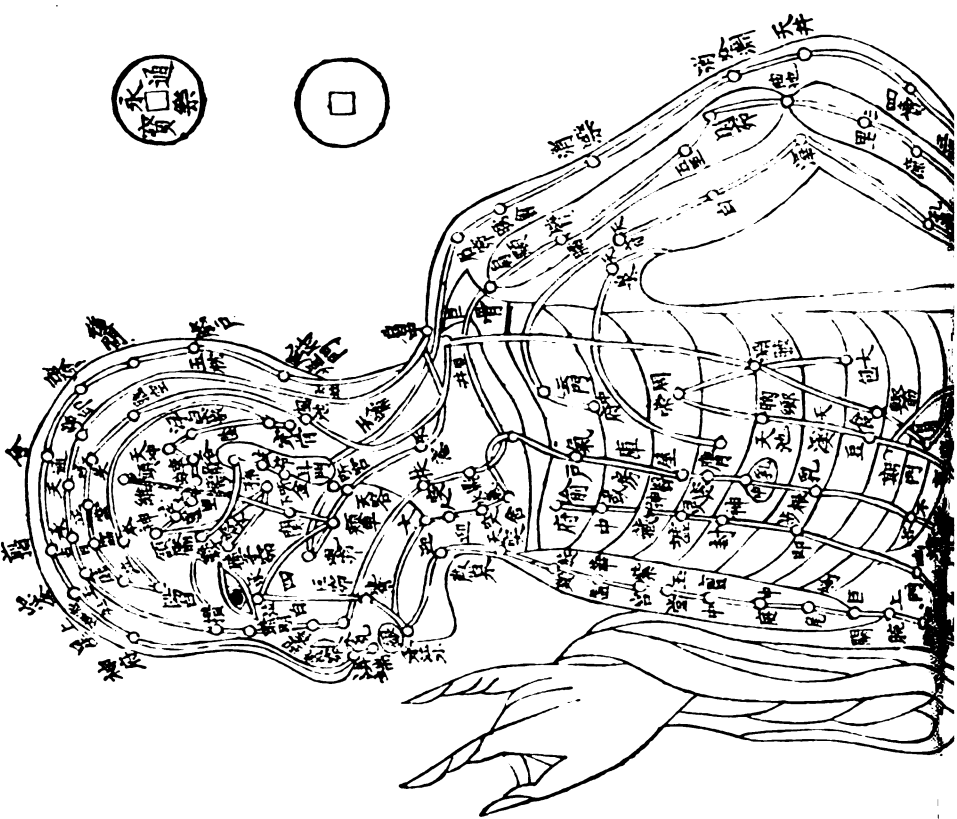
Please remember that these statements are printed in English, copyrighted in America, and intended for American consumption. Furthermore, to judge from the names signed to the usual testimonials of patent medicine literature which are appended, these statements have been swallowed by a "Judge," a "Reverend," and have been masticated at least by a newspaper editor; who, of course, may not swallow everything he sees fit to print. But let us return to Mr. Foo and his cosmogony, which is undoubtedly his honest belief, along with the few hundred millions of his countrymen who have held this venerable creed for so many centuries.

"Mineral produces water: water produces vegetation: vegetation produces fire: fire produces earth: earth produces mineral." "The mineral element is stronger than the vegetation, and can control it; vegetation controls the earth, earth controls water, water controls fire, and fire controls mineral; water can stop fire and dissolve mineral." . . . "This is the simplest explanation of the relation between the herbal remedies and their effects on the different vital organs." Here you have in a nutshell the Chinese conception of nature and the working of natural laws. According to this, medical science is on the same basis as astrology, and certain drugs influence certain organs by mysterious laws of relationship, as certain planets influence certain destinies. And this beyond question

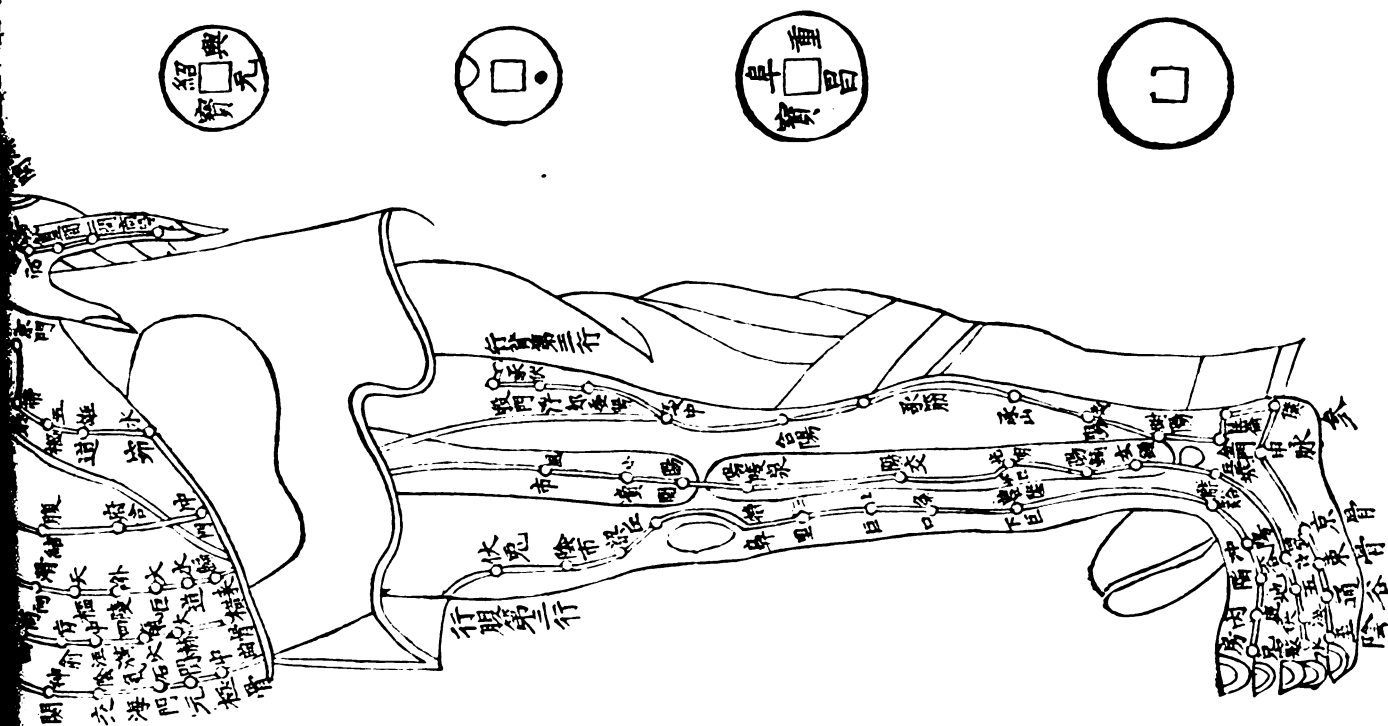
CHINESE MEDICAL DIAGRAM  
OF THE HUMAN BODY.

側人明堂圖

經言肺之原出於  
太淵心之原出於  
太陵肝之原出於  
太衝脾之原出於  
太白腎之原出於  
太谿心之原出於  
兌骨脾也胆之原  
出於埤墟胃之原  
出於衝陽三焦之  
原出於陽池膀胱  
之原出於京骨大  
腸之原出於合谷  
小腸之原出於腕  
骨是十二經之原  
又不可不知也



SOME OF THE PLACES WHERE  
NEEDLES MAY BE INSERTED  
TO LET OUT DISEASE, SHOWN  
BY SMALL CIRCLES. PARAL-  
LEL LINES SHOW IMAGINARY  
AIR-PASSAGES IN THE BODY.



嘉慶二十四年 恩賜太醫院六品御醫錢松鏡湖氏重鐫

is still the view of many people even in America, including some Judges and Reverends, who fail to realize that the actions of a drug in the human body are definite chemical combinations and physical reactions, selective for certain tissues, and becoming more clearly understood and formulated with each succeeding year. As Prof. Cushney says, "The action of drugs is quantitative and not qualitative; the activity of living matter may be changed, but the form which the activity assumes is unchangeable."

In other words you can quicken or retard the action of the heart, by giving the proper drugs in the proper way, but no drugs will make the heart do anything but pump blood through the arteries and veins. The Chinese idea, and that not uncommonly held even in America, is that certain drugs have the power to go to certain organs, and by the exercise of some mysterious and transcendental force, drive out any disease which may affect these organs. This is the superstition to which the patent medicine men appeal, with their "kidney-cures," "liver-cures," "lung-cures," and all the long list of cures over which so much printer's ink has been shed, and so many landscapes disfigured. We are quite ready to laugh at the absurd notions of the Chinese, but a trip from New York to Philadelphia by daylight, between almost unbroken rows of signboards whose staring colors proclaim the virtues of this or that "cure" will show how large a proportion of enlightened Americans are still, through an unreasoning habit of mind, pretty much on the same level mentally as the "heathen" at whom we laugh.

As to actual conditions in China, they are about what one would expect where over-population produces a fearful struggle for existence, where ignorance leads to constant infraction of nature's laws, and where there is only denser ignorance available to relieve the suffering which results from the struggle and the law-breaking. Needless to say, the Chinese medical profession contributes little or nothing to the actual betterment of conditions; indeed its efforts could be more properly put on the debit side of the account, for the few drugs of value within the scope of its knowledge are so generally misused, and its practice is so full of useless and even brutal maltreatment, that not a little of this sum total of misery must be laid to its charge. Even the best of them, "graduates" of the "Imperial Medical College," are the merest ignorant empirics. Dr. S. Wells Williams, for years the Secretary of the American Legation at Peking, with unequalled opportunities for observation, says of this "College": "There are nine main divisions in Chinese medicine. . . . A professor of each of these classes is attached to the Royal Family, who is taken from the (Imperial) Medical College at Peking. But he has no greater advantages than he could get from his own reading and practice. No museums of morbid or comparative anatomy exist in the country, nor are there any lectures or dissections; and the routine which old custom has sanctioned will go on till modern practice, now rapidly taking its place, wins its way." China can usually show the oldest examples of any

form of abuse or fraud, and here is the oldest example of the "diploma factory" for physicians, now fortunately all but extinct in America. Its graduates have a parrot-knowledge of an appalling array of huge tomes, but in the words of a rustic philosopher, "It is better not to know so much, than to know so much that ain't so." As Remusat said of them: "In place of studying the organization of bodies, they undertake by reasoning to determine how it should be: an aim which has not seldom led them far from the end they proposed."

If this is true of the best that China can produce, the court physicians of the Emperor, it is not hard to appreciate the attainments of the average Chinese medical man, and to understand the results of his practice. There are the "needle-doctors," whose entire armamentarium consists of needles of different shapes and sizes, and whose entire training it is to learn the three hundred and twenty or more places into which a needle may be thrust to "let out the disease." The writer has repeatedly seen old festering sores and even destruction of the eye or the knee-joint as a result of such punctures. Then there are the men who use caustic chemicals or the red-hot iron for all forms of disease. There is a Chinese treatise on the use of the cautery which fills seven volumes. Then there are the absurd and useless remedies handed down for ages as of sovereign efficacy. A classic example is a treatment for eye disease. "Put half a chicken over the eye as a poultice, and eat the other half." There is some ground for the Chinese proverb, "The ordinary physician is a murderer." Fortunately for China, its leaders now realize the defects of the old system, and are doing their best to introduce Western medical science. The relatively few Chinese who have been trained according to Western ideas in Government and Missionary medical schools are in great demand among all classes of the population; and the influence of the old-style physician of China is daily lessening among his own people.

The writer does not wish to be charged with overestimating the influence of Chinese practitioners in America. They are a fad of which the good people of Los Angeles, Boston, and Brooklyn will soon tire: as with theosophy and kindred delusions, these cities will always welcome "some new thing." But in behalf of the credulous woman and the defenseless child who suffer by these follies, the truth should be given at least as much circulation as the falsehood, even if somebody loses money thereby.

### SARCOMA OF THE UTERUS.\*

By EMMET RIXFORD, M. D., San Francisco.

Sarcoma of the womb is commonly regarded as a comparatively rare tumor and as a consequence has received very little attention from clinicians until within recent years. While cases of "recurrent fibroids" had been observed and recorded and which were doubtless sarcomatous, the first case to be designated sarcoma of the womb was reported

\* Read before the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of the State Society, Del Monte, April, 1912.